

other side. That is, a battle between those who we hope will be China's future and those who should be made part of China's past.

One manifestation of this struggle is political and perhaps increasing military friction with the United States. Taiwan remains the No. 1 flashpoint. Add disputes over human rights, political prisoners, arrest of American citizens and permanent residents of Chinese origin, Tibet, regional policies, weapons transfer. These issues will remain with us for years, if not decades.

Our decisions must be measured through one optic: What are the core American strategic and economic interests vis-a-vis China?

First, we want stability in the Asian region. We must ensure that China does not threaten this stability. That means committing the United States to being a full participant in Asia—economically, politically, and militarily. This includes ensuring peace across the Taiwan Strait, and that means providing Taiwan with the tools necessary for its defense and assisting with the peaceful resolution of the China-Taiwan issue.

Second, we want to help in the transformation of China from a totalitarian state with a nonmarket economy toward a more liberalized political and economic regime. That means incorporating China into the world trade community while insisting on respect for basic human rights.

Third, we want full access for American goods and services to the largest country in the world with the fastest growing economy. That means completing China's accession to the WTO, granting them PNTR, and supporting our businesses' efforts to penetrate the Chinese economy. It does not mean revoking China's established normal trade status.

To isolate China and to seek retribution might feel good, but it would not do good. Even worse, it threatens our core long-term interests. We should responsibly protect our interests and confront China when situations warrant. But reason, not emotion, must guide our decisions.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Monday, April 30, 2001, the Federal debt stood at \$5,661,347,798,002.65. Five trillion, six hundred sixty-one billion, three hundred forty-seven million, seven hundred ninety-eight thousand, two dollars and sixty-five cents.

Five years ago, April 30, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,102,049,000,000. Five trillion, one hundred two billion, forty-nine million.

Ten years ago, April 30, 1991, the Federal debt stood at \$3,445,059,000,000. Three trillion, four hundred forty-five billion, fifty-nine million.

Fifteen years ago, April 30, 1986, the Federal debt stood at \$2,008,271,000,000. Two trillion, eight billion, two hundred seventy-one million.

Twenty-five years ago, April 30, 1976, the Federal debt stood at \$601,974,000,000. Six hundred one billion, nine hundred seventy-four million, which reflects a debt increase of more than \$5 trillion, \$5,059,373,798,002.65. Five trillion, fifty-nine billion, three hundred seventy-three million, seven hundred ninety-eight thousand, two dollars and sixty-five cents during the past 25 years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF AMTRAK

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, today marks an important day in the history of national passenger rail transportation. Today is the thirtieth anniversary of the American National Passenger Rail Corporation, Amtrak. As we mark Amtrak's birthday, we need to understand that the demands on our national passenger rail system are changing. Amtrak can no longer be solely a link to a bygone era, when a long train ride was the only way to get from one city to another. The Amtrak of the next 30 years must be a faster, more competitive transportation option for the American traveler. A population that is more mobile than ever before but faces gridlock on our highways and capacity limitations in our skies demands this of Amtrak. Our Nation's passenger rail system has already begun to change in the Northeast Corridor, where in just four months, Amtrak has shuttled over 55,000 people between Washington and New York on four daily high-speed trains. This unexpectedly high ridership has helped Amtrak beat revenue estimates for the Northeast Corridor by four percent. Overall, ridership in the Northeast is up eight percent over last year.

It is my hope that the Congress commemorates Amtrak's thirtieth birthday by passing legislation this year that allows Amtrak to continue to improve high-speed rail service in the Northeast Corridor and replicate that success in the Northeast. The High Speed Rail Investment Act is Amtrak's future. This legislation would allow Amtrak to sell \$12 billion in tax-exempt bonds to finance the development of high-speed rail corridors throughout the country, and would allow for continued track improvements in the Northeast Corridor. Though Amtrak will raise \$12 billion, the High Speed Rail Investment Act will cost taxpayers only about one-third of that amount. I am proud to be working closely with my colleagues Senators BIDEN and HUTCHINSON, as well our leaders, Senator LOTT and Senator DASCHLE, to enact this legislation this year, and I am excited to see that the bill has 55 cosponsors and wide bipartisan support.

On Amtrak's birthday, I hope each one of us will take a serious look at the importance of inter-city passenger rail

to our Nation. Inter-city passenger rail is a critical link to our Nation's history, reminding us of how we used to travel this glorious country. And that's a link which many members of Congress have taken great pains to maintain in their states and districts. At the same time, in many places, such as the northeast, a modern inter-city passenger rail network is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Amtrak's challenge of late has been to satisfy both of these roles while trying to act like a profit-making company. This task has not been easy for a quasi-independent government agency that, for its whole life, has operated under many Congressionally-imposed burdens but has received sporadic and insufficient financial support from the federal government.

I think we are all aware that Amtrak is subject to unique political pressures that private companies do not face. And I think we all know that those pressures, which often require the company to operate unprofitable routes, influence the company's bottom line in a negative way. But high speed rail has proven to be a financial success in the Northeast, and is projected to add \$180 million annually to Amtrak's bottom line when all 20 Acela Express trainsets are in operation. High speed rail is a good investment for Amtrak, and it's a great investment for our nation's transportation infrastructure.

It is time to bring Amtrak into the 21st century by creating an effective, truly inter-modal transportation network. Let's make high speed rail service an indispensable element of our transportation infrastructure—our overburdened highways and skyways require it and the traveling public demands it.●

TRIBUTE TO SUE HENSLEY

• Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise today to say thank you to Sue Hensley for all of her efforts on my behalf to serve the people and the State of Arkansas during the past six years. In those six years, I found her counsel to be invaluable and of great aid, and I am proud to say that she is not only a former employee but also a good friend. She worked long hours and did whatever was required to competently fulfill her duties as my Communications Director. I am indebted to Sue for her service and I wish her the best of luck in her new position as Director of Communications of the Department of Labor and continued success in her career.●

TRIBUTE TO THE ROTC PROGRAM AT PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

• Mr. REED. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the achievements of the ROTC Program at Providence College on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary.

ROTC dates back to 8 January 1951, when the Very Reverend Robert J. Slavin, O.P., President of the College,